

**Bishopton Parish Council**  
**Parish Meeting 15<sup>th</sup> May, 2019**

**Parish Annual Report**

Bishopton Parish Council has operated all year with six councillors and have been unsuccessful in recruiting a new councillor. We have also operated for the whole year without a permanent chairperson and have elected a chair to serve on a monthly basis. We were very sad to learn of the death of our former clerk David Thorman who became ill last summer and unfortunately was not able to continue in the role. David contributed an enormous amount over his years of service to the Parish Council and he is greatly missed. We continue to work with DBC, our Borough Councillor Brian Jones and always support our Village Hall and St Peters church. Councillors attend various committees representing BPC. We strive to communicate as effectively as possible with residents and hope that they feel able to contact any member of the Council if they have queries or concerns.

**Registered Village Green**

The Parish Council work very hard to maintain the registered Village Green to a high standard thus improving the visual amenity for all its' residents.

Annual Litterpick The annual litter pick took place on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> March and was a great success. 20 adults and 1 child attended and a large number of bags were later collected by D.B.C. on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> March. It is a shame that we could not have addressed a wider area of the village and its surrounds which we could have done had we had more volunteers. The Parish Council wish to record thanks to everyone who participated. We are especially grateful to Councillor Robins and her husband who co-ordinated the collection of all the rubbish bags.

DBC have been contacted regarding the mature trees situated on the village green. We have requested an inspection of the trees with a view to pruning any which need attention.

The Village Green outside 11-17 High Street has been completely renovated and the whole area has been transformed with the development of the cottages.

Last Autumn the council undertook to plant more daffodil bulbs on the village green area. We feel this has enhanced the green and intend to continue to repeat this again this year.

The tubs situated around the village green will be planted out with the summer planting May/June.

Whilst some jobs are now having to be paid for, we still have some loyal volunteers who do odd jobs around the village when requested. A big thank you to them.

**Planning applications.**

A number of planning applications were received during the year and the PC considered them and responded to DBC accordingly.

Various applications have been granted for agricultural buildings, extensions, tree felling, a second dog walking area etc.

## **Highways Issues**

Our speed monitoring equipment is being repaired with the help of grant funding and will be fitted with a solar panel so that it need not be taken down and recharged. We have also been successful in securing grant funding for further traffic monitoring equipment. With all these successful grants we hope to have three solar power speed monitors on all three access roads to the centre of the village.

Our attempts to start up Community Speedwatch should be able now to proceed as we have recently had a number of volunteers come forward to participate in the scheme.

Our roads continue to be plagued by potholes. No sooner are they filled in than they appear again. The Parish Council has contacted D.B.C. on numerous occasions and informs them straight away if they notice a new problem. The Borough Council have gone some way to repairing central areas of the village especially behind the church. We have been assured that the main road through the village will be treated in this coming year, and the damaged village sign and posts will be repaired at the West end of the village.

Flooding on many approach roads to the village continues to cause great concern to residents. It is important that flooding issues are reported to the highways dept of the Borough Council as they occur.

## **Local Bus Service**

The service to Darlington on a Monday continues

## **Financial**

Les Foggett is our responsible Financial Officer and will report separately.

We are very grateful to Peter Wood for his help at audit time and whenever we need financial advice.

## **Playing Field**

We are now making great progress with this project. The lease for the field was signed on the 8<sup>th</sup> November and work preparing the field began in January. The field is now all fenced in and new gates have been installed. The groundworks began at the end of April to selectively kill weeds in the field and sow mixed grass and roll and prepare the surface to turn the agricultural land into a playing field. We have obtained funding from the Banks **Wind Farm** fund to cover this.

We will be inviting residents and parents to a meeting to form a playground management group who will report to the Parish Council and help to formulated policy for the future of the playground and creation of the play area.

We are looking into suppliers of play equipment and will be preparing bids fro grant aid towards this.

## **Battles Over**

On 11<sup>th</sup> November 2018 the UK and its friends overseas marked the day 100 years ago when the guns fell silent at the end of the First World War.

A number of events took place in Bishopton and the children at Bishopton Redmarshall C of E Primary School also joined in. The children made laminated poppies to be put in windows or on gates around the village. These were sold in aid of the Poppy Appeal. A Remembrance Service was also held at the school on 8<sup>th</sup> November.

On 11<sup>th</sup> a Service of Remembrance was held in St Peter's Church at 10.30am and wreaths were laid at the Cenotaph at 11am. Cllr Latham had made beautiful poppies that were placed in the ground around the Cenotaph.

In the evening another ceremony took place which involved a reading of the 'Tribute to the Millions' by Councillor Geoff Preston and we were really lucky to get the services of W.O. Bandmaster Dave Crowther to play The last Post and Reveille on the bugle before the lighting of the beacon on the church tower roof by Mr Peter Slater. After this the church rang the bells as did many others up and down the country. We would like to thank all those who participated in this special and very moving commemoration taking time to remember the many millions who were killed or came home dreadfully wounded.

### **Bishopton Airfield**

We have received the plaque from The Airfields of Britain Conservation Trust (ABCT) to commemorate Bishopton Airfield one of Britain's World War One Home Defence fighter Flight Stations and landing grounds which played a major part in winning the conflict. Bishopton Airfield was used from October 1916 to August 1919 and various fighter types of No 36 Squadron had Bishopton available to them as a Home Defence landing ground. The plaque will be mounted on a stone plinth on the village green on the opposite side of the road from the Millenium Obelisk. Unfortunately we haven't been able to gain permission to mount the plaque at the actual site of the airfield which is situated to the south west of the village on the right of the road on the way to Little Stainton. The actual position can be found at <http://www.abct.org.uk/airfields/airfield-finder/bishopton/>

### **Other activities**

The Parish Council again provided a Christmas tree for the village which volunteers kindly erected along with lights throughout the village. Once again BPC paid for Fishburn Brass Band to come and play carols for residents around the tree. It was a most enjoyable event and well attended.

A poppy wreath for Remembrance Sunday was provided and placed on behalf of residents by the Parish Council.

The information board for Bishopton Castle ( Motte & Bailey) has had to be replaced as it broke. English Heritage would not pay to have it replaced so the Parish Council have had a new sign made. It will be installed in the next few weeks.

We have had a number of complaints from residents about dog fouling and obstructive car parking. We urge residents to be more careful and please report any incidents of dog fouling, car parking, or any anti-social behavior to the Clerk at the Parish Council or directly to the new DBC Enforcement Office on 01325 406999 (office number) or email [civicenforcement@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:civicenforcement@darlington.gov.uk)

We are in the process of having the website re-written and brought more up to date – the address will still be the same [www.bishoptonvillage.co.uk](http://www.bishoptonvillage.co.uk)

The Parish Councillors.